



**CITY OF WESTMINSTER
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MEETING SUMMARY**

**Thursday, June 8, 2017, at 7 PM
City Hall, 1838 Emerald Hill Lane**

A meeting of the City of Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission was held at City Hall, 1838 Emerald Hill Lane in Westminster, Maryland 21157, on June 8, 2017, at 7 PM.

Chair Peggy Bair, Vice Chair Kevin Beaver, Commissioner Thomas J. Rio, and Commissioner Lori Welsh-Graham, and Council Member Benjamin Yingling were present. City staff Bill Mackey and Andrew Gray were present. Also, City staff Barbara Sardi was present as a member of the public.

The following were present and signed-in: Mr. Thom Bethune, Mr. Kevin Brown, Mr. Brian Augustine, and Mr. Chris Mudd.

Chair Peggy Bair opened the meeting at 7:02 PM. Chair Peggy Bair welcomed the Commission's new *ex officio* member, Council Member Benjamin Yingling and congratulated Mr. Yingling.

Chair Peggy Bair asked for a motion regarding minutes. Commissioner Rio moved approval of the summary of the meeting on May 11, 2017. Vice Chair Beaver seconded. The motion passed.

Chair Peggy Bair opened Old Business for discussion by the Commission.

Chair Peggy Bair initiated the discussion of Item D regarding proposed revisions to proposed Ord. No. 869 for wireless technology, which had been tabled on May 11, 2017. Chair reviewed the options for adding the Neighborhood Overlay Preservation zone to the required zones for review, noting that historic preservation is one of the goals desired via the proposed ordinance.

Vice Chair Beaver requested that the I-G General Industrial zone be added as a zone where the wireless technology could be permitted by right, and expressed a desire for an historic review.

Mr. Brian Augustine mentioned the State Historic Preservation Officer and the National Register District were not usually involved in the placement of devices with unlicensed frequency. For the placement of such devices on existing poles, Mr. Augustine expressed that only 5% of the poles would likely be able to support additional devices, due to present heavy use.

Adopted July 13, 2017

Mr. Thom Bethune expressed concern over the fairness of Ordinance No. 868 that allows devices including cabinetry on poles, which have such a high level of intrusion, while the proposed Ordinance No. 869 requires screening for much smaller wireless internet devices.

Mr. Kevin Brown distributed a letter to the Commission, which he read aloud, as his comment. In the letter Mr. Brown recommended the Hagerstown approach to allow unscreened devices.

Mr. Thom Bethune spoke requesting that the ordinance be split, in order to allow a separate ordinance to be crafted to address the devices related to wireless internet broadband access.

Council Member Yingling commented on the process for deployment, requesting clarification. Discussion ensued regarding the provisions from City of Hagerstown, provided in the packet.

Vice Chair Beaver moved to recommend approval of the revised screening criteria presented with the following changes: (1) include a new subsection for micro wireless antennas, modeled after the wording in the City of Hagerstown document, with the description and definition modified to ½ meter in height and diameter; and (2) that the facility use would be added to correct the omission of including the facility use in the I-G General Industrial zoning district.

(MICRO) WIRELESS COMMUNICATION ANTENNA ARRAY – An antenna array for the reception of wireless communications services, less than ~~two~~ one-half meters in height and diameter, which is either ground-mounted or attached to an existing building or structure.

Screening. Landscaping and privacy screening shall be employed to screen outdoor equipment facilities from view. When located in an historic district, it is recommended that the micro antenna and any necessary support devices be painted and/or positioned to minimize its visual impact and to protect the historic character of the affected building and neighboring buildings.

Commissioner Welsh-Graham seconded. The motion passed.

Chair Peggy Bair opened the discussion of Item E regarding the proposed Ordinance No. 875 relating to Solar and Wind Energy Facilities. Commissioner Welsh-Graham noted that spacing panels could be included as part of fire protection. Vice Chair Beaver mentioned that he would prefer panels being built into the roof, flush with the roof surface, as opposed to mounted kits.

Chair Peggy Bair requested that Item E be placed on the Commission's agenda for next month.

Chair Peggy Bair initiated the discussion of Item B regarding the proposed sign for Sonic at 400 North Center Street. Mr. Gray presented the staff report and staff recommendation.

Commissioner Welsh-Graham moved for approval, as presented. Commissioner Rio seconded. The motion passed.

Chair Peggy Bair opened the discussion of Item B regarding the proposed discussion of rules and regulations. Commissioner Welsh-Graham moved to table Item C. Vice Chair Beaver and Commissioner Rio seconded. The motion passed.

Chair Peggy Bair initiated the discussion of Item A regarding the Mid-Cycle Review of the *2009 Comprehensive Plan*. Mr. Gray made a presentation and summarized the major ideas in each chapter of the plan. Mr. Gray also highlighted the focus of the stated goals in each chapter.

Chair Peggy Bair opened Planning Commission and Public Comments. Vice Chair Kevin Beaver noted that considering the number of utility poles with mounted antennas across the City, he would recommend that the Mayor and Common Council revisit existing Ordinance No. 868.

Commissioner Welsh-Graham mentioned that she would not be available for the September meeting of the Commission.

Chair Peggy Bair raised the levels of illumination at the City Park playground as being intrusive.

Commissioner Welsh-Graham motioned to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chair Beaver seconded. The Commission adjourned at 10:02 PM.